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### Coping with inadequacy

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# Summary

## Introduction

This dissertation is about the effects of ‘centralised teacher recruitment’ in ward secondary schools in Tanzania. It reveals that the centralised teacher recruitment within education decentralisation in Tanzania has failed to achieve its claimed objective of redressing the inequalities in the deployment of teachers. This seems to be the case despite the acknowledgement that the establishment of ward secondary schools in Tanzania is ‘a success story.’ By being a success story, it means that these schools have some positive contributions in country’s education development, namely; increasing the number of public secondary schools, whereby in 2007 ward secondary schools constituted more than one-half of all 2495 public secondary schools in Tanzania. Another contribution is the spread of secondary education service to the remote areas of the country as well as increasing the secondary education enrolment rate, which after 2004, is over 80 percent as opposed to 6 percent in the 1990s (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training 2007). Despite such achievements, the operation of ward secondary schools has mainly been challenged by the shortage of teachers. The centralised approach to teacher recruitment has been inadequate to respond to the teacher crisis confronting these schools to the extent that they have structured their internal operations for coping with this shortage.

## Research questions

This dissertation has addressed the following central research question: What are the effects of ‘centralised teacher recruitment’ in ward secondary schools in Tanzania? This research question is further divided into the following operational research questions: How is ‘centralised teacher recruitment’ conducted in Tanzania? To what extent has this recruitment approach been successful in redressing the inequalities in the deployment of teachers in Tanzania? How does ‘centralised teacher recruitment’ affect the six selected ward secondary schools in the

Morogoro region? And how may teachers' operations in the selected ward secondary schools in the Morogoro region be explained?

## Research findings

The main research findings are organised to reflect the first three operational research questions in this dissertation.

The first operational research question reflects the way centralised teacher recruitment is operationalised in Tanzania. The MoEVT manages the function of secondary teacher recruitment in Tanzania for the purpose of redressing inequality in teacher deployment throughout the country. However a number of central government institutions such as the Ministry of Finance and the President's Office – Public Service Management have important preliminary roles to perform in facilitating the recruitment process. For example, the Ministry of Finance has the duty of approving the budget which forms the basis for MoEVT to prepare personnel emoluments. The President's Office-Public Service Management approves the personnel emoluments and issues the employment permits to allow MoEVT to continue with the recruitment exercise. At the district (council) level, although each ward secondary school submits its preference to the district (council) education office, the education officials, based on TSR criterion, establish the need for teachers for each local secondary school and the district in general. After recruiting teachers, the MoEVT uses its discretion to post them to the districts through the regional education offices. The district education offices finally allocate posted teachers to ward secondary schools. TSR continues to be the dominant criterion in both determining the needs and posting teachers to their working stations.

The second operational research question reflects the extent to which centralised teacher recruitment has been successful in redressing the inequalities in teacher deployment in Tanzania. The study reveals that inequalities in teacher deployment exist and ward secondary schools which are located in the rural areas suffer the most from shortages of teachers. The TSR in rural ward secondary schools exceeds the standard TSR of 1:30 as recommended in Tanzania's secondary education development programme (SEDP). Their urban counterparts have TSR below the standard one. Although the six ward secondary schools are not representative of all ward secondary schools in Tanzania, still as case studies, they have provided insights into the failure of centralised teacher recruitment in redressing the inequalities in teacher deployment. In this way, the findings of this dissertation correspond with the situation of uneven teacher distribution between the urban and rural settings as indicated by the World Bank in reference to the state of teachers in Tanzania in 1999 and 2004. This dissertation further notes that TSR, as the main criterion used to determine the demand for teachers in

ward secondary schools, gives these local schools an unbalanced internal teacher distribution in the subjects they offer. This happens when the preferences of the local schools are not considered in the allocation of teachers to them.

The last operational research question reflects the effects of centralised teacher recruitment in the six selected ward secondary schools. Obviously the shortage of teachers in either all or a number of subjects has been noted. The state of teacher inadequacy coupled with the local schools' operational environment develops the following internal operational arrangements or routines for coping with the situation:

#### *Single subject teaching practice*

In Tanzania, each secondary school teacher qualifies to teach two subjects. But the state of teacher inadequacy in the selected ward secondary schools means that the few teachers that are present have heavy teaching workloads which make it impossible for each of them to handle two subjects. Then the adoption of a single subject teaching practice seems to be the option to enable teachers to cope with their workloads. The practice means that teachers choose one of the two subjects they qualify to teach.

#### *Biased teaching practice*

Where there is severe teacher inadequacy, biased teaching practice is the option on top of the single subject teaching practice. That is teachers decide to deliver teaching to certain classes which are labeled as 'special and critical.' Normally the biased teaching practice targets classes which are required to sit for the national examinations.

#### *Part-time teaching practice*

The practice is embedded in the teaching alliance among the ward secondary schools. Collectively the local schools respond to the state of teacher inadequacy by getting teachers in the subjects with shortages from other neighbouring schools. This course of action means teachers take advantage of both their schools of origin and the neighbouring ones.

#### *Private teaching practice*

On some occasions, teaching sessions in the normal class hours are not adequately covered. Then the need for extra teaching as a means to strengthen the teaching practice as well as coping with teacher inadequacy becomes inevitable. Therefore with the local alliance in place, parents and teachers divide responsibilities between them to facilitate the extra teaching. In this arrangement, parents are obliged to support teachers financially in order for them to perform extra teaching far beyond the normal working hours. Hence the initiative locally for-

malises the private teaching whereby teachers are paid per sessions in extra teaching from the contributions made by parents.

*Teaching dwelling on past examination questions (past examination papers)*

The aim is to enable teachers to pass through many issues in a short time. That is, teachers, having been exposed to heavy teaching workloads, abandon the traditional teaching approach which wants them to follow the approved syllabus of each subject and adopt the mode of teaching which targets orienting students to answer examination questions. The practice is viewed as a time saving approach and a means to create awareness for the students on the requirements of various questions.

*Employing temporary teachers*

Caught in the situation of teacher inadequacy, ward secondary schools locally perform the role of employing authority and unfortunately they end up employing unqualified teachers to cover the gaps in the subjects mostly affected by the shortages.

*Relaxation and flexibility in the application of the formal rules*

The approach is used as a motivational technique to encourage teachers to continue working in ward secondary schools. The justification for this course of action is that sticking to the formal rules in an environment which is characterised by inadequate basic necessities will only discourage teachers who have agreed to work there. As a result, things such as frequent absenteeism both in the short and long term are locally institutionalised to allow teachers have some time to attend their private activities even when it means utilising the official working hours.

*Establishing local associations (interdependence)*

The system of local associations in the selected ward secondary schools seem to be the means for binding teachers together to enable them help each other in their localities. Local associations are regarded as the means for teachers' affiliation and support in both the good and bad times. They are considered as inevitable and indispensable in these ward secondary schools.

## Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework is an important tool that has been developed to explain the operations of teachers in ward secondary schools in Tanzania. The leading question in this dissertation to guide the use of the theoretical framework is: How may the theoretical concepts of 'street-level bureaucrats' (SLB) and 'semi-autonomous social fields' (SASF) be used to explain teachers' operations in the

selected ward secondary schools? The challenge of teacher inadequacy in ward secondary schools, resulting from the inability of the centralised teacher recruitment approach to redress it, causes the following: first, it jeopardises their efforts to sustain the claimed success story of their existence and second, it limits their abilities to provide quality education service in the localities. The situation of teacher inadequacy only achieves to make teachers and school administrations to function as ‘street-level bureaucrats’ (Lipsky 1980). That is, they have developed their routines of teaching to enable them to cope with the state of resource inadequacy (the shortage of teachers).

The fact that ward secondary schools strive to cope with their environment, the internal arrangements or routines developed become normative orders. In other words, they are the local legal rules that regulate and control the internal affairs in these schools and eventually dictate the extent to which they (ward secondary schools) comply with the directives and guidance from the higher authorities (MoEVT through REO and DEO). This is the point where the concept of ‘semi-autonomous social fields’ (Moore 1973) comes into the theoretical framework.

## Conclusion

The research findings from the six selected ward secondary schools (Nelson Mandela, Milengwelengwe, Kihonda, Sumaye, Kipera and Melela) in the Morogoro region show the extent to which decentralisation in Tanzania has limited effectiveness in ensuring the provision of quality social services to the local communities. Although decentralisation is the means to transfer powers to the localities, in Tanzania, the centralised approach that accompanies it seems to push aside that objective. Actually the centralised approach to the local problems or issues seems to have failed to adequately provide solutions which address the diverse needs of the local institutions. As a result, the local institutions find themselves in a situation where they have to figure out their own quick fixes and perform their responsibilities in a way that can merely cope rather than improve the provision of secondary education. In this way, they tend to develop their own normative orders or local rules that have the potential of limiting the effectiveness of the central rules directing the provision of social services in the localities.